

Message Text

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FOR: AGRICULTURE, FAS, FCA, GRAIN AND FEED DIVISION

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TAGS: EAGR, CH

SUBJECT: PRC 1975 GRAIN HARVEST ESTIMATED AT 277 MILLION TONS

REF: (A) TOFAS 195 (HK 12581)

(B) HK 10242

(C) HK 7374

BEGIN SUMMARY: CHINA'S 1975 GRAIN CROP IS NEW RECORD, PRELIMINARILY ESTIMATED AT 277 MILLION METRIC TONS, AN INCREASE OF 12 MILLION M.T., OR 4.6 PERCENT, OVER 1974'S RECORD GRAIN HARVEST ESTIMATED AT 265 MILLION M.T. ALL COMPONENTS OF ANNUAL HARVEST APPEAR TO HAVE CONTRIBUTED --RECORD OUTPUTS OF WINTER GRAINS, EARLY RICE AND AUTUMN-HARVESTED CROPS INCLUDING LATE RICE. GAINS IN 13, OR POSSIBLY MORE, PROVINCES MORE THAN OFFSET SHORTFALLS OR AVERAGE PERFORMANCES OF OTHER PROVINCES.

AMONG FACTORS CLAIMED AS CONTRIBUTING TO RECORD OUTPUT WAS TREMENDOUS MASS EFFORT IN RURAL CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION OVER PAST YEAR, IMPLEMENTATION OF CORRECT POLICIES, SPIRIT AND EFFORT AIMED AT OVERCOMING NATURE, AND AVAILABILITY OF INCREASED QUANTITIES OF PRODUCTION INPUTS. END SUMMARY.

1. CHINA HAS ACHIEVED ITS FOURTEENTH CONSECUTIVE "GOOD" HARVEST THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO NOVEMBER 9 NCNA PRESS RELEASE. IN 1975, UNCLASSIFIED

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A YEAR WHICH FEATURED "GENERAL IMPROVEMENT IN FARM OUTPUT IN

GREAT MAJORITY" OF CHINA'S 29 PROVINCE-LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS, THERE WAS "A FAIRLY BIG INCREASE" IN TOTAL GRAIN PRODUCTION OVER 1974. ALONG WITH REITERATION OF RECORD SUMMER HARVEST (REF C) AND RECORD EARLY RICE CROP (REF B), NCNA CLAIMED AN INCREASE IN AUTUMN-HARVESTED CROPS INCLUDING PROBABLE 10-PERCENT INCREASE IN LATE RICE CROP (STILL BEING HARVESTED IN SOUTH).

2. EIGHT PROVINCE-LEVEL UNITS INCREASED THEIR GRAIN OUTPUT BY 10 PERCENT (OR MORE) AND FIVE ACHIEVED "CONSIDERABLE INCREASES". (OVERALL RESULTS IN REMAINING 16 UNITS NOT MENTIONED.)

3. EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON EFFORTS TO "OVERCOME NATURE" WHICH IN PART OFFSET ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING GROWING SEASON WHICH INCLUDED RAIN AND LOW TEMPERATURES IN SOUTH, EXCESSIVE RAIN AND FLOODS IN PARTS OF CENTRAL AND EAST CHINA, AND "WORST SUMMER DROUGHT IN DECADES" IN PARTS OF NORTHEAST, NORTH AND SOUTHWEST. AMONG POLICIES GIVEN CREDIT FOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN AGRICULTURE IN RECENT YEARS, NCNA REFERRED TO "TAKING AGRICULTURE AS FOUNDATION" AND "TAKING GRAIN AS KEY LINK", AN ENLIGHTENED TAX POLICY, AND A PRICE STRUCTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND PRODUCTION INPUTS WHICH FAVORS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.

4. OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RECORD GRAIN HARVEST INCLUDED UNPRECEDENTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY 100 MILLION PEASANTS WHOSE WORK IN RURAL CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION RESULTED IN NEW OR IMPROVED IRRIGATION ON 4 MILLION HECTARES (HA.), PROTECTION FROM WATER-LOGGING ON 2 MILLION HECTARES (HA.), IMPROVED FIELDS COVERING TOTAL AREA OF 7.7 MILLION HA., AND RECLAIMED WASTELAND OF 400,000 HA. NCNA ALSO POINTED TO POPULARIZATION OF "SCIENTIFIC FARMING", IMPROVEMENT IN PLANT PROTECTION WORK AND AN INCREASE IN CHINA'S MULTIPLE-CROPPING INDEX. MORE TANGIBLE INPUTS AND SUPPORT TO PRODUCTION--INCLUDING MORE AND BETTER AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, MORE CHEMICAL FERTILIZER, INSECTICIDES AND FUEL, AND AVAILABILITY OF MODERN TRANSPORT--WERE ALSO CREDITED AS CONTRIBUTING TO RECORD GRAIN HARVEST.

5. COMMENT: TO DEVELOP A "BEST ESTIMATE" OF CHINA'S 1975 GRAIN PRODUCTION, RESULTS OF A PROVINCE-BY-PROVINCE APPROACH BASED ON NCNA'S REPORT AND NUMBER OF ASSUMPTIONS WERE COMPARED WITH RESULTS OF A "CROP-GROUP" APPROACH ESTIMATING PRODUCTION OF MAJOR GRAIN-GROUPS ON NATIONAL LEVEL. FIGURE USED AS PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE FOR 1975--277 MILLION METRIC TONS--IS COMPROMISE BETWEEN LOWER ESTIMATE RESULTING FROM PROVINCIAL APPROACH AND HIGHER ESTIMATE FROM CROP-GROUP APPROACH.

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6. IN AREA-WEIGHTED PROVINCIAL APPROACH, AREAS WITH REPORTED AND ESTIMATED INCREASES (18 PROVINCE-LEVEL UNITS) ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE INCREASED TOTAL GRAIN PRODUCTION IN 1975 BY 4.9 PERCENT ABOVE 1974. HOWEVER, THOSE GAINS WERE OFFSET BY 10 PROVINCES WITH ESTIMATED LOSSES (OR NO GAINS) WHICH REDUCED ESTIMATED INCREASE IN 1975 TO NET GAIN OF 3.5 PERCENT OVER 1974

7. IN NATIONAL-LEVEL APPROACH, ESTIMATED INCREASES IN PRODUCTION OF EARLY, INTERMEDIATE AND LATE RICE, TOGETHER WITH THOSE OF

WINTER GRAIN, SPRING WHEAT AND MISCELLANEOUS GRAINS, RESULTED IN HIGHER ESTIMATED INCREASE OF 5.7 PERCENT. COMPROMISE WAS AVERAGE OF TWO; I.E., 4.6-PERCENT INCREASE OVER THE 265 MILLION M.T., HARVEST OF 1974 (AGRICULTURAL OFFICE ESTIMATE; SEE REF A). 8. WHILE ESTIMATE MAY APPEAR HIGH TO SOME OBSERVERS, AGRICULTURAL OFFICE FEELS COMFORTABLE WITH RESULT (I.E., 277 MILLION M.T.) AS REASONABLE PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE DERIVED FROM VERY LIMITED INFORMATION AND MADE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF HARVEST IN RICE-IMPORTANT KWANGTUNG PROVINCE AND OTHER SOUTHERN AREAS. AMONG REASONS WHICH SUPPORT THAT VIEW ARE FOLLOWING: (A) THE WORK OF MILLIONS OF PEASANTS EACH WINTER GREATLY INCREASES CHINA'S ABILITY TO WITHSTAND DROUGHT, WATERLOGGING AND FLOODS EACH YEAR. FOR EXAMPLE, CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF 4 MILLION HA. UNDER "NEW AND IMPROVED" IRRIGATION IN 1974-75 WATER CONSERVANCY YEAR (OCTOBER 1974 - SEPT. 1975), ADDED TO A 4-MILLION HA. INCREASE IN PREVIOUS YEAR, AND SO ON, OUGHT TO HAVE MAJOR BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON YIELDS AND PRODUCTION OF GRAIN AND OTHER CROPS; (B) INCREASED AVAILABILITY AND USE OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS (PRODUCTION IN JAN - AUGUST 1975, UP BY 24.4 PERCENT), PLANT PROTECTION CHEMICALS, FARM MACHINERY AND OTHER INPUTS PLAY STRONG ROLE IN INCREASING PRODUCTION; (C) INCREASED SOWN AREA, LARGELY THROUGH INCREASED MULTIPLE CROPPING, MEANS A CUMULATIVE INCREASE IN AREA SOWN TO GRAIN AND OTHER CROPS EACH YEAR; (D) THE IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE OF CHINA'S GRAIN SECTOR IN 1974 IN SPITE OF "RELATIVELY SEVERE NATURAL ADVERSITIES" (APPARENTLY AS BAD, IF NOT WORSE THAN THOSE OF THIS YEAR); AND (E) THE FACT THAT SUMMER HARVEST TAX COLLECTION TARGETS WERE OVERFULFILLED THIS PAST SUMMER INDICATES THAT DESPITE ADVERSE WEATHER, WINTER GRAIN PRODUCTION APPARENTLY INCREASED IN MORE AREAS THAN EXPECTED. (TAX COLLECTION TARGETS ARE BASED ON ASSUMPTION THAT A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF CROP AREA WILL BE CALAMITY-STRICKEN, AND THUS EXEMPTED FROM TAXATION. IF CROP PRODUCTION DOES NOT SUFFER AS MUCH FROM NATURAL CALAMITIES AS IS NORMALLY ANTICIPATED, UNCLASSIFIED

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THE STATE IS ABLE TO FULFILL OR EVEN OVERFULFILL ITS GRAIN TAX COLLECTION TARGETS. THIS APPARENTLY WAS THE CASE THIS YEAR.) 9. THESE CONSIDERATIONS LEND SUPPORT TO ESTIMATES BASED PRIMARILY ON SOWN AREA. CROSS

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